

64<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

# WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS

## Evidence-based Practices for Learners with Significant Disabilities

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PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2014

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## 3 Evidence-based Practices

**PECS**

**Assistive Technology**

**Social Stories**

- Why you should use each EBP
- How you should use each EBP
- Which of your students each EBP is best for

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# PECS Picture Exchange Communication System

Dr. Michelle Flippin

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## Why should you use PECS?

### PECS

Request an item      Receive the item

- Behavioral intervention
- 6 Training Phases
- Low-tech AAC system
- Exchange-based communication
- Evidence-based practice

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## Which of your students is PECS best for?

### Student Characteristics

- Non-verbal
- Not using functional communication
- Does not initiate
- Interested in exploring objects
- Deficits in joint attention

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## Reinforcer Assessment

- Items of high interest for the student
- Small items (sets)
- Variety of items
- Not items that cause meltdowns

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Phase	PECS Training
1	Physical Exchange
2	Distance & Persistence
3	Picture Discrimination
4	Sentence Structure "I want ..."
5	Responding to "What do you want?"
6	Comments "What do you see?"; "What do you have?"

Bondy & Frost, 2002

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Request an item      Receive the item

**PECS Phase 1: Physical Exchange**

**Student will:**

- Pick up a picture
- Reach toward trainer
- Release into trainer's hand

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**Phase 2: Increase spontaneity**

**Student will:**

- Go to communication book
- Retrieve picture
- Take to communication partner

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### Phase 3: Discrimination Training

**Student will request a desired item:**

Go to communication book

Select the appropriate picture

Give it to the communication partner

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### Phase 4: Sentence Structure

Student requests present and non-present items using a multi-word phrase

- Picking up a symbol of "I want:
- Putting it on a sentence strip
- Choosing the desired picture
- Putting it on a sentence strip
- Giving strip to communication partner

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### Phase 5: Answering "What do you want?"

**Student will:**  
Spontaneously request a variety of items and can answer the question, "What do you want?"

- Delayed prompting
- "I want" picture and sentence strip
- Desired item available

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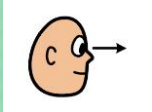
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## Phase 6: Questions



**Student appropriately answers:**

- "What do you want?"
- "What do you see?"
- "What do you have?"

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## PECS: Fully Functional Communication?

Primarily trains requests

"Comments" responses to adult prompt

- What do you want?
- What do you see?

Other, early developing communicative functions (e.g. protests) are not taught

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## Tuesday, around 1:30



Greeted your friend.

Read & answered your email.

Requested a coffee.

Repaired a breakdown.

Confirmed a hair appointment via text.

Posted a selfie from Greensboro on Facebook.

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<b>Protests</b>		
I don't like it	You don't understand	I hate that
I don't want that	I don't want to 	Wrong
Leave me alone	Unfair	Whoops

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<p>Questions about using PECS?</p>	

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# Assistive Technology and Visual Supports

Dr. Cate Smith

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## Why should you use AT and visual supports?

- Assistive technology (AT) is:
  - Strategies
  - Practices
  - Devices
  - Services
  - To assist children with disabilities




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## Levels of AT

- No Technology  
Adapted ways to perform activity (no tools/devices)
- Low Technology (Lite technology)  
Inexpensive, simple to make, easily obtainable, usually non-electronic or non-motorized
- Middle Technology  
Fairly inexpensive, battery operated
- High Technology  
Devices that are more complex, difficult to create, more expensive (usually have electronic, electric, mechanical or hydraulic components)

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## Evidence Base

- Technology-aided intervention- using technology for instruction
- Visual supports – visual schedules, graphic organizers, scripts, technologically-based tools

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## How do you use AT and visual supports?

- Get to know your student
  - IEP
  - Prioritize
  - Assessment
  - Intervention Action Plan

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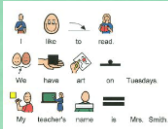
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## Low Tech Visual Supports

- Reading- color line prompting strategy
 

The boy then turned and saw his friend holding his puppy. He was so happy that his lost puppy was found. Tears began to swell in his eyes. He now knew how much the puppy meant to him and how he would always take good care of him.
- Writing - Writing with Symbols
  - Mayer Johnson




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## Other Examples of Low Tech Visual Supports

**First**




magnetic numbers

**Then**



ball bounce



- Manipulatives
- Visual Schedules
- Highlighter
- Post-It's
- PECS
- Communication Bracelet
- First-Then Boards
- Penny Boards

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## Mid Tech Visual Supports

- Screen magnifier
- Switch-adapted games
- Battery-operated Communication Devices
- Power Point Slides

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## High Tech Visual Supports



- Computer
- Tablet/iPad
- Smart Board
- AAC Communication Device (computer based- dynamic display)

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## Which of your students are AT and visual supports best for?

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Developmental Disabilities




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## Questions about using AT and visual supports?

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## Social Stories

Dr. Sharon Richter

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## What are Social Stories?

- A story that includes “social cues, perspectives, and common responses” in a specific arrangement
- One effective teaching strategy utilized to increase skills and knowledge among students with disabilities that has emerging evidence in the research literature.
- The goal of a Social Story™ is to depict “accurate social information” to result in improved skills among individuals with disabilities, including autism

(Gray Center, 2014)

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## Why should you use Social Stories?



When I am finished eating I wait for my family to finish eating. I make sure to stay in my chair.



There are times at school when it is ok, and good, to be silly and talk with my friends. On the playground, at lunch, and when we go to parties, I can be silly!



I will not kiss the girls at school

- Simple to create
- Easily adapted to address students' individualized needs
- Easy to reflect students' ability to comprehend text

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## Why should you use Social Stories?



- Ease of implementation
- Impact on a wide array of dependent measures



I will not kiss the girls at school



I can take a break  
GOOD choice!




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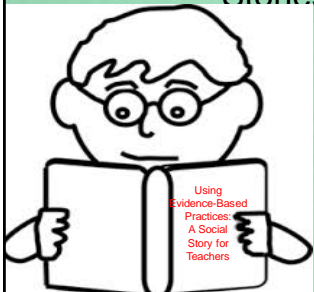
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## Why should you use Social Stories?



Evidence-Based Practice

- Across behaviors and skills
- Range of ages
- Various disabilities

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## How do you use Social Stories?

- Writing a Social Story
  - Select skills to improve
  - Consider relevant social cues and appropriate responses
- Align with Gray's guidelines
- Variations
  - Paper
  - Multi-media
  - Videos

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## How do you use Social Stories?

- Implementing a Social Story Intervention
  - When?
  - Who implements the intervention?
  - How?
  - How frequently?
  - Should I pair with other intervention elements?

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## Which Target Skills are Social Stories effective in improving?

- Social Skills
- Increase appropriate behavior; decrease inappropriate
- Life Skills
- Self-determination skills for secondary transition







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## Which of your students are Social Stories best for?

- Students who would benefit from
  - Explicit instruction related to a behavior or skill
  - Concrete examples of abstract social norms
- Students with autism
- Students with ID


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## Questions about using Social Stories?

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## Data Collection

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### Data Collection

- Assess student performance
- Use data sheets
- Collect data
  - Occurrence or non-occurrence of behavior
  - Level of assistance needed
- Count independent correct responses to determine progress over time

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### Resources & References

Resources

- Pyramid Educational Consultants (PECS Manual & Materials) <http://www.pecs.com/>
- Gray Center <http://www.thegraycenter.org/>

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